



Fact Sheet: TB 129

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Technical Bulletin 129

- In the early 1990s, the California Bureau of Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation was approached by the fire service, building code officials, architects and interior designers, and prison, hospital and university managers to develop a standard which would protect against hazards associated with the ignition by open flame of mattresses in public institutions.
- With the support and assistance of the domestic mattress industry, the Bureau developed an open flame standard for mattresses used in public buildings known as Technical Bulletin Number 129 (TB 129).
- This standard, entitled "Flammability Test Procedure For Mattresses for Use in Public Buildings" was published as a draft standard in October 1992.
- The test measures the resistance of a finished mattress to a large open flame which might be encountered in an accidental or arson-caused fire in a public occupancy. The risk of fire in these occupancies is higher than in residences, due to the larger fuel load present, larger numbers of occupants, lack of familiarity with the environment and reduced ability to escape.
- Public occupancies that could follow this standard include college dormitories, prisons and other penal institutions, hospitals and health care facilities, hotels, motels, day-care centers, nursing, convalescent and board and care homes and other types of live-in public occupancies.
- Since its publication as a draft standard by the Bureau, TB 129 has been adopted as a voluntary consensus code by the American Society of Testing and Materials as A.S.T.M. E-1590 and the National Fire Protection Association as N.F.P.A. 267. These two standards use essentially the same test protocol as TB 129 but contain no failure criteria.
- The TB 129 standard, originally developed by the Bureau, is not currently mandated by California law. However, fire districts and other local fire authorities may adopt TB 129 as a mandatory standard for live-in occupancies within their jurisdictions and may apply failure criteria appropriate to the occupancy or use involved.
- The TB 129 test is designed to simulate a waste basket filled with burning newspaper placed under the side edge of the mattress. During the test the heat released is measured. Failure criteria are set conservatively to prevent the mattress from causing a major flashover fire.
- TB 129 is designed only for testing of finished mattress articles or complete bedding systems, including box springs and bed clothing or accessories. It does not apply to the testing of individual component materials used in construction of bedding systems, such as ticking materials, foam pads, cotton battings, etc. Normally, the bare mattress is tested with no foundation or bed clothing present.
- Compliance with TB 129 or the A.S.T.M. or N.F.P.A.-equivalent standard, may be a condition of private or government purchasing contracts for mattress or bedding systems. Consult the responsible jurisdiction for information.
- The Bureau has no information regarding other states, cities or jurisdictions, which may have adopted TB 129. Further information may be obtained from the Sleep Products Safety Council (S.P.S.C.), 501 Wythe Street, Alexandria, VA, 22314-1917, (703) 683-8371, FAX (703) 683-4503, web site: www.sleepproducts.org